

Romans – Gospel of God Exalted

Facilitated by Sister Patricia Weaver

Thursday April 10, 2025

Memory Verse

Romans 12:10 NASB95 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor.

Supernatural Living—Part 1

Christian living is supernatural living, that cannot be attained by the unregenerate man. The obedient, disciplined, and productive Christian life is directed and empowered by God's own Spirit. In short, supernatural living is conforming our outer lives to our inner lives, living out the redeemed, purified, and holy nature we have in Jesus Christ, becoming in practice what we are in position a new creation.

Romans 12: 9-13 NLT- Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

Romans 12: 9-13 NASB95 - Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what evil; cling to what is good. **10** Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; **11**not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; **12** rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, **13** contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.

POINT 1 - PERSONAL DUTIES

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Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. (12:9 NASB95).

LOVE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY (12:9a)

The **first** duty is, **let love be without hypocrisy**. The greatest virtue of the Christian life is love. The use of *agapē* (**love**) was rare in pagan Greek literature, doubtless because the concept it represented—unselfish, self-giving, willful devotion—was so uncommon in that culture it was even ridiculed and despised as a sign of weakness. But in the New Testament it is proclaimed as the supreme virtue. *Agapē love* centers on the needs and welfare of the one loved and will pay whatever personal price is necessary to meet those needs and foster that welfare.

God Himself “is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him” (**1 John 4:16**). Jesus made unequivocally clear that in both the Old and New Testaments the two greatest commandments are: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind” and “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (**Matt. 22:37–39**). In fact, He went on to say, “On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets” (**v. 40**). Echoing that same truth, Paul later admonishes in his letter to Rome, “Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law” (**Rom.13:8; cf. v. 10**).

Love is more important to a Christian than any spiritual gift he may have. “But now abide faith, hope, love, these three,” Paul explained to the Corinthian believers “But the greatest of these is love” (**1 Cor. 13:13; cf. 12:31**). It is therefore not surprising that the first “fruit of the Spirit is love” (**Gal. 5:22**) and that it is by our love for our fellow believers that “all men will know that [we are Jesus’] disciples”

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(John 13:35). In behalf of the Thessalonian believers, Paul prayed, “May the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another” **(1 Thess. 3:12; cf. 1 John 3:18)**. Suffering “much endurance, in afflictions, in hardships, in distresses, in beatings, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labors, in sleeplessness, in hunger,” Paul himself served the Lord’s people “in the Holy Spirit, in genuine love” **(2 Cor. 6:4–6)**.

It is that same unfeigned love of one another that Peter admonishes all believers to exhibit: “Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart” **(1 Pet. 1:22)**. Later in the same letter, the apostle repeats the command: “Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins” **(1 Pet. 4:8)**.

Genuine love is so integral to supernatural living that John declares, “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death” **(1 John 3:14)**. In other words, a person who shows no evidence of *agapē* **love** has no claim on Christ or on eternal life.

A Jewish woman who lived near a church was refused marriage counseling by her synagogue because she had not paid her dues. She was upset and determined to go to the nearest religious institution to get help. As she walked past another church one Sunday morning, she soon found herself inside. As she explained later, she was drawn to her Messiah and Savior that day because she could sense the great love manifested by the members for each other.

The love of which Paul, Peter, and John speak is genuine love, the sincere and fervent love that is completely **without hypocrisy** and untainted by self-centeredness. Christian love is pure, guileless, and unaffected.

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Hypocrisy is completely incompatible with *agapē love*. The two cannot coexist. **Hypocrisy** is exceeded in evil only by unbelief. The hypocrite in Scripture, Judas, pretend devotion to Jesus to achieve his own selfish purposes. His hypocrisy was unmasked and his self-centeredness was made evident when he betrayed Jesus for the thirty pieces of silver.

Discussion Questions

1. What does it mean to love without hypocrisy? How can you apply it to your life?

HATE EVIL (12:9b)

The **second** longing of the new nature and personal duty of supernatural living is to **abhor what is evil**. Hatred of evil is the other side of love, which, by its very nature, cannot approve of or “rejoice in unrighteousness” (**1 Cor. 13:6**). **Evil** is the opposite of holiness and therefore the antithesis of godliness. Just as “Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom” (**Prov. 9:10**), “Fear of the Lord [also] is to hate evil” (**Prov. 8:13**). The child of God abhors evil because God abhors evil.

Evil is the enemy of God and the enemy of love, and it is to be as fervently abhorred as love is to be fervently coveted. It is for that reason the psalmist commands, “Hate evil, you who love the Lord” (**Ps. 97:10**). The Christian who genuinely loves will genuinely **abhor what is evil**. Because of his great love for God, David determined, “A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil” (**Ps. 101:4**). The faithful believer can strike no settlement with evil, every form and degree of which will be avoided.

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Jude admonishes, “But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith; praying in the Holy Spirit; keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh” (**Jude 20–21, 23**). In other words, when we witness to the unsaved, we must be careful that in our zeal to win them we do not allow ourselves to be drawn into sins from which they need deliverance. Doctors and nurses are dedicated to helping those who are ill, even from the deadliest diseases, but they take every precaution to protect themselves from those diseases, lest they, too, become infected.

Someone has said that the only security against sin is to be shocked by it. The constant bombardment of our senses through TV, social media, magazines, movies, and books with the immoralities, violence, and perversions of modern society makes it difficult to be shocked by anything. Tragically, many Christians regularly entertain themselves with sheer ungodliness, perhaps rationalizing that, simply by being a Christian, they are somehow immune from sinful infection.

Psalm 1 says, “How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the path of sinners, nor sit in the seat of scoffers!” (**1:1**). We cannot flirt with sin and escape falling into it. Refusing to be enticed even by the first, seemingly harmless attractions of sin, the righteous man delights “in the law of the Lord, and in His law, he meditates day and night” (**v. 2**).

Even among pagans, Corinth was known as “sin city,” and many believers in the church there had great difficulty giving up the ways of their old life. Paul warned that their only safe response to the allures of sexual immorality and idolatry was to

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“flee” from them (**1 Cor. 6:18; 10:14**). He warned Timothy that “the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang” (**1 Tim. 6:10**). Again, his advice was simple and direct: “Flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness” (**v. 11**). Paul repeated that counsel to Timothy in the second letter: “Flee from youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (**2 Tim. 2:22**). It is impossible to pursue righteousness while we tolerate evil.

“There are six things which the Lord hates, yes, seven which are an abomination to Him,” the writer of Proverbs tells us. They are: “Haughty eyes (arrogance), a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that run rapidly to evil, a false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers” (**Prov. 6:16–19**). Obviously, that is not an exhaustive list, but a representative sampling of the countless sins that man has devised to disobey the Lord and reject His ways.

Greater exposure to evil should invoke greater resistance to it, no matter how often or how intensely we are confronted by it. We must “examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good [and] abstain from every form of evil” (**1 Thess. 5:21–22**). Because “we have the mind of Christ” (**1 Cor. 2:16**), we must, like Him, love righteousness and hate sin (**Heb. 1:9**). We are to love what He loves and hate what He hates.

Discussion Questions

2. Explain what it means to hate evil? How can you apply it to your life?

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HOLD ON TO THE GOOD (12:9c)

The **third** personal duty of supernatural living is to **cling to what is good**. It is to be used of any bond—physical, emotional, or spiritual. As servants of Jesus Christ, we are to bind ourselves **to what is good**, that which is inherently right and worthy.

The **good** is “whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute.” And “if there is any excellence and if anything, ’ worthy of praise,” Paul continues, “let your mind dwell on [or **cling to**] these things” (**Phil. 4:8**).

In **1 Thessalonians 5:21–22**, the apostle gives similar instruction: “Examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; abstain from every form of evil.” That is clearly a call to discernment, the thoughtful, careful evaluation of everything, so we can decide, judged against God’s Word, what to reject and what to cling to.

As Paul has already explained, the key to finding and following **what is good** is in not being “conformed to this world, but [being] transformed by the renewing of [our] mind, that [we] may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect” (**Rom. 12:2**). As we separate ourselves from the things of the world and *saturate* ourselves with the Word of God, the things that are good will more and more replace the things that are evil.

Discussion Questions

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3. How do we hold on to good? How can you apply it to your life?

4. ON A SCALE OF 1-10, EVALUATE HOW YOU ARE DOING IN EACH OF THESE.

- **LET LOVE BE WITHOUT HYPOCRISY** _____
- **ABHOR WHAT IS EVIL** _____
- **CLING TO WHAT IS GOOD** _____

5. WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN THIS LESSON?

CLOSING PRAYER